

Principles for Target Setting

Overview

The quality of a trainee's teaching should be assessed against the Teachers' Standards in full. Reviewing the evidence of the impact a trainee has on the learning and progress of pupils over time is a key process in this assessment. To make progress, the trainee and mentor need to work in partnership, setting, monitoring and reviewing targets to support a continuous cycle of improvement throughout the PGCE year and beyond. This complex problem solving process is an important part of the **Mentoring Cycle**.

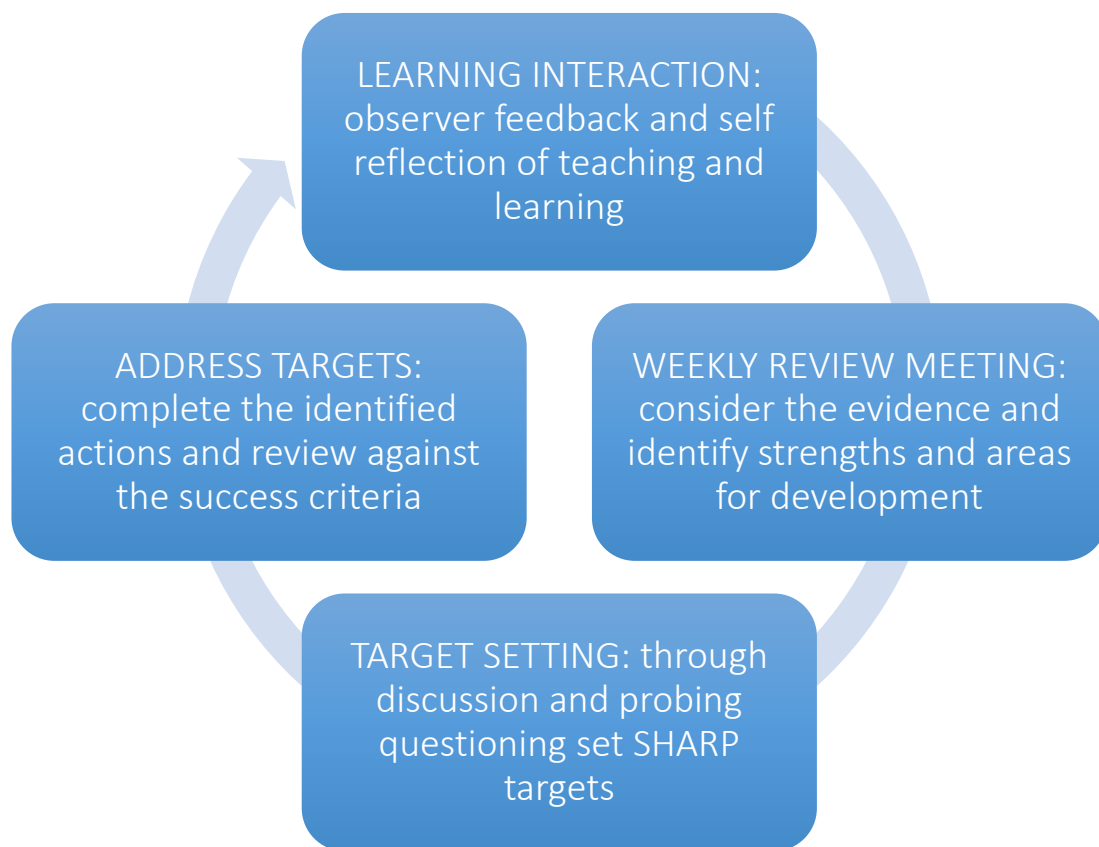


Figure 1: The Mentoring Cycle

This guide is intended to:

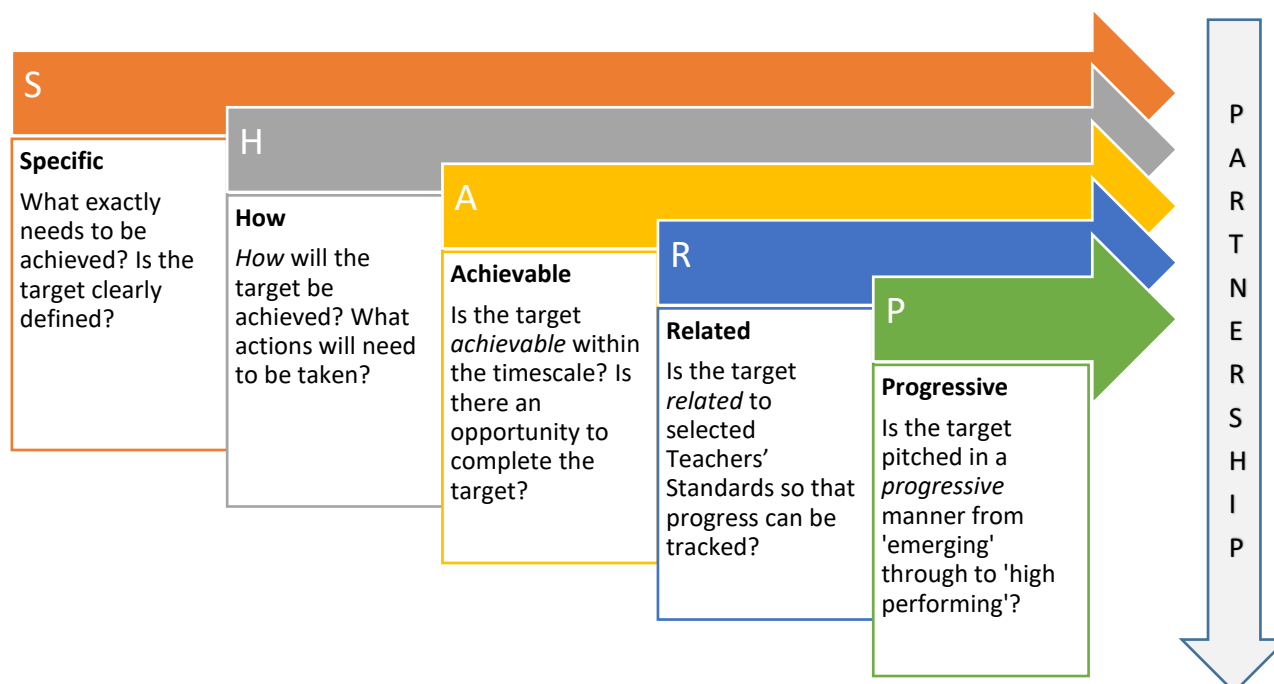
- Support trainees and mentors to write targets that move trainees from emerging, to competent, to good with the aim of becoming high performing over time.
- To support a cycle of continuous development.
- To clarify and exemplify good practice in the setting of **SHARP** targets.

Where target setting happens in the University of Worcester PGCE and its purpose

All targets are linked to the Teachers' Standards. Therefore, most targets should be guided by the assessment criteria in the **Meeting the Teachers' Standards** booklet.

Location of targets		Rationale/purpose
1. Weekly Review forms on PebblePad	<i>Short Term</i>	2-3 priority short term targets identified in partnership between the trainee and mentor for focus during the week. These arise from lesson observations and are reviewed at weekly review meetings.
2. Lesson observation forms (3 per week)	<i>Short Term</i>	Targets identified at the weekly review are the key focus for identified lessons. Key areas for development arising from the lesson inform the targets for the following week.
3. School Reports	<i>Medium Term</i>	Mentors periodically (3 times per year) identify medium term areas for development. These targets inform those prioritised for the action plans.
4. Action plans and the University of Worcester Career Entry Profile (UWCEP)	<i>Medium and Long Term</i>	Trainees periodically use their school reports to produce action plans. The final plan is the UWCEP that is emailed to employing schools and includes targets for the start of the induction year.

The Target Setting Process



Specific

Clarifying targets is a complex problem-solving process, therefore initially targets tend to be written in very general terms. They are *blunt* targets. Unravelling the **specific** within the general needs to be done so that actions which demonstrate progress towards the target can be identified. Unravelling takes a little time and it's always helpful to have someone asking probing questions to help tease out the detail.



Mentor can ... draw on all available evidence (e.g. lesson observation feedback, trainee self-evaluation, discussions with teachers etc.) to inform initial discussion. Have some questions pre-prepared to help draw out the detail with the trainee.
Trainee can ... draw on critical self-reflection, weekly reviews, pupil feedback etc. to identify the key area for development.

How

Asking the question, “**How** will the target be achieved?” is crucial. If the action needed is beyond current experience, then no progress is made. If the action needed is not challenging, then progress is stagnant, resulting in complacency. So, asking the “How...?” question will also help to hone the target and make it specific. This part of the target setting process then ensures that the target is measurable as each action is completed successfully.



Mentor can ... draw on own experience to suggest actions; direct trainee to research or ‘expert’ teachers within the school.
Trainee can ... draw on suggested actions on lesson observation feedback forms, from discussion with other trainees, from their reading and from university sessions.

Achievable

Targets that are set on a weekly basis need to be **achievable** within that weekly timeframe. Targets also have to be achievable within the ‘sphere of influence’ of the trainee – there needs to be an *opportunity* to take suitable actions and *classes or age groups* identified. Initially support may be needed from the mentor or class teacher or fellow trainee. But longer term target setting needs to become autonomous allowing for independence and ownership of personal development. Medium- and long-term targets, by their nature, will require a level of support to achieve them and this support should be clearly identified especially in the UWCEP.



Mentor can ... check the actions are pitched so that the trainee has the right amount of time and expertise to complete them.
Trainee can ... manage the time available so that ‘time’ does not become a barrier to success; focus on personal organisation; schedule tasks in a realistic timeframe.

Related to the Teachers’ Standards

The target setting process is, as indicated in the introduction, a means of gathering evidence of meeting the Teachers’ Standards. Therefore, targets will need to **relate** to the Teachers’ Standards but not take on the exact wording. Targets need to be more specific and tailored to the needs of the individual. It is likely that a target will cover elements of several Teachers’ Standards and these

should be clearly identified as the target is constructed. Careful and regular use of the **Meeting the Teachers' Standards** booklet will help to identify the two or three Teachers' Standards bullet points appropriate for each target.



Mentor can ... deconstruct the Teachers' Standards with the trainee and support them in prioritising so that progress becomes visible.
Trainee can ... become familiar with the language of the Teachers' Standards; make use of the Meeting the Teachers' Standards booklet to track progress against each standard.

Progressive

All trainees entering the PGCE course are suitable to train to teach but all have very different prior experience. When setting targets the starting point must be decided on an individual basis. The Meeting the Teachers' Standards booklet outlines a clear progression route from 'emerging' through to 'high performing'. Becoming familiar with the characteristics of each stage and the language used in the descriptors will help to frame each target appropriately.



Mentor can ... establish a trusting relationship with the trainee so that appropriate challenge can be leveraged at the right time.
Trainee can ... write a clear introduction, including prior experience, on the 'About Me' page in PebblePad which is shared with mentors; be prepared to take the initiative; be prepared to be challenged and take risks.

Example of an outcome of the Target Setting process

Context: The trainee is placed in School 2 and is being asked to set homework for her classes.

In School 1 the trainee set online mathematics homework tasks which were not necessarily linked to the work covered in class and were easy to administer. Now she wants to think carefully about the tasks that she sets so that homework makes clear links with the classwork and helps pupils to consolidate their knowledge and understanding by practicing procedural methods of adding fractions. She also wants to use an idea based on a university session. The trainee is progressing from 'emerging' to 'competent' in Teachers' Standard 4c but is also becoming more accountable for the pupils' progress which is Teachers' Standard 2a.

Target	Actions
Plan a homework activity with Year 7 set 1 for week beginning 22 nd February which is focused on helping students to develop fluency in adding fractions. (TS 4c, TS 2a).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find a 'mathematical étude' type task which provides a rich context for practicing adding fractions. Explain the activity carefully at the <i>start</i> of the lesson and get students to stick the homework sheet into their books and write the homework in their planner. In the following lesson ask three students to come to the board and share their results and methods. Identify what is 'good' about the methods used. Take all the books in and 'mark'. Provide short written feedback based on the criteria students gave you for what was a 'good' method. Get students to look at these comments at the start of the next lesson.